



Another successful reef and beach cleanup took place this weekend.

Organizer Castro Perez declared he was very pleased with the response and outcome of this past weekend's clean-up efforts during the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Aruba Reef Care Project. A total of nearly 500 volunteers spent Saturday and Sunday morning under the water or along the coastline collecting trash and beautifying Aruba's assets. It was a spirited effort supported by fifteen hotels that provided box lunches and refreshments and various island vendors. Mourik Caribbean, N.V. placed large containers for dumping the collected trash in six locations, and then hauled it away. Others that sponsored the project included Economy Car Rental, who provided a vehicle for the project coordinators; Balshi Beer donated beer and bottled water; Hoori, N.V. and Serlimar provided the garbage bags; SETAR, N.V. the usage of two way radios, and DTI a van for transporting supplies.

S.E.A. Fly n' Dive reported pulling out several sacks of debris from under the sea around the De Palm Island Area and the Hash House Harriers filled eight pick up trucks with trash from around Seroe Colorado and the Pet Cemetery in the San Nicolas Area.

Turtuga Aruba, the turtle protection agency, trolled the coast north of the California lighthouse, which is a problem area because prevailing sea currents fill the beaches with garbage that has been dumped at sea by oil tankers and other vessels. Castro Perez reports that he and other concerned parties in Aruba have made an appeal to various agencies and organized a letter writing campaign to try to stop the dumping.

The project attracted volunteers from all over Aruba, and a number of island visitors joined in the effort. Chris and Patrice Christian of Dallas Texas lent a hand with the friend Reinke of the Sunflower Apartments in Selina Cerca. It was a first anniversary celebration project for Chris and Patrice, as they had cleaned up the Arashi beach area in the morning when they joined the project last year, and then got married on the beach at sunset! They report they consider it "an honor" to be a part of it all, and to work side by side with natives in beautifying the island.

On Sunday afternoon, volunteers gathered at the Hadicurari Center to relax and enjoy a bite to eat and some refreshment, while the organizers raffled off weekend stays donated by The Wyndham Aruba Resort & Casino, the Amsterdam Manor, Paradise Beach Villas, and the Aruba Grand Beach Resort & Casino. Dinners for two from several restaurants and sunset sails by various watersports operators had also been donated as raffle prizes in appreciation for all the hard work done in the hot sun and under the sea. The News congratulates the Reef Care organizers on another successful project, and give a heartfelt thank you to all those that participated.